

July 16, 2014

Dear Congressional Member:

We write to each of you to thank all of you for your efforts to address the dire water situation facing the State of California. The passage of S. 2198, the Emergency Drought Relief Act out of the U.S. Senate, and H.R. 3964, the Sacramento-San Joaquin Valley Emergency Water Delivery Act out of the U.S. House of Representatives, are significant and commendable milestones. The efforts you have taken are greatly appreciated. Our members are, however, acutely aware of the need for you to promptly resolve the differences between these bills before any legislation will become law. We also know that our producers are in urgent need of a change in law.

Therefore, we are asking each of you to work diligently and in good faith to bridge your differences. Failure will ensure the continuation of the current regulatory and policy regimes, which were intended to improve the health of the Delta and the Central Valley but have done the opposite. As a result, increased acreage will be fallowed, unemployment will rise dangerously, there will be excessive demands on food banks, and families in disadvantaged communities will be unable to provide for their basic needs.

To facilitate the resolution of your differences, we have come together to emphasize the concepts the producers we represent believe are essential to any legislation that moves forward. To be meaningful, any bill must:

- Provide congressional direction concerning the operation of the Central Valley Project and the State Water Project to ensure sufficient operational flexibility to restore water supply and water supply reliability. The operators of these projects must be able to capture water from the Delta during periods of higher flows and move water from north to south in a rational way.
- Extend the provisions of any legislation for a period of time that will allow communities to establish sound long term water supplies for their future;
- Establish a process that could lead to increased storage in a reasonable timeframe;
- Ensure that additional burdens are not placed on the State Water Project as a result of congressional action; and
- Recognize that the reasonableness and efficacy of the San Joaquin River Restoration Program must be reevaluated in light of changed conditions since its authorization, including the reality of federal budget constraints.

We are optimistic that if you focus on addressing these concepts, you can resolve your differences in time to provide our communities the needed relief. It is critical for you to move forward with policies that restore regulatory balance, achieve benefits, and improve the social, economic, and environmental health of much of California.

Respectfully,



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President

African American Farmers of California



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President

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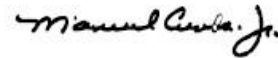
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